LEO'S WHALING VOYAGE

RUTH GRAFSTROM

"The signal of the Dolphin was heard in the distance. Leo clasped his mother in his arms as he kissed her farewell." Page 43.

LEO'S WHALING VOYAGE

BY

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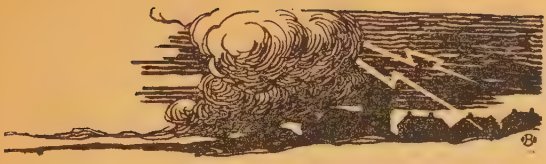

CHAPTER I.

THE BERRYMAN COTTAGE.

"Hold the boat steady, Fred," advised his brother Leo; "a little more to the left. Yes, that is the spot; now we will step out and bring this splendid catch home; mother will be pleased that we have done so well. We will get at least three dollars at the market for this fine cod, weighing ten pounds; the small fish will also bring a fair price."

"Yes," responded Fred; "it will not take me a minute to fasten the rope to the post; then I will help you carry the nets up the hill."

The sun was setting, its rosy beams illuminating the waves of the North Sea in the distance and the sails of a ship gliding over the broad expanse; also the ripples upon the Weser, and their home cottage on the bank; its glistening windows shaded by vines that ran to the red-tiled roof. The Berryman cottage was a plain little dwelling, but dear to the hearts of the widowed mother and her two sons—Leo, eighteen, and Fred, two years younger.

Healthy, cheery boys they were, believing that no place could be lovelier than their cottage home, the river gliding peacefully by the foot of their lawn, the flowers in their little garden, and the great linden in the yard, all adding their share to make it lovely, and homelike.

"Tell mother that I will be back when I have washed the nets and hung them up to dry," said Leo, as he dropped the fish into a basket, then ran with swift steps down the path to the river, meeting on the way an elderly man, evidently from the city, who halted and spoke:

"Can you tell me where Mrs. Martha Berryman lives?" he asked in a business tone.

Leo glanced at the stranger and hesitated before making a reply, wondering who the man was and why he came.

"Don't you know?" asked the stranger impatiently, "or are you unwilling to give the information?"

"Well, that's my mother; she lives over there," said the boy, pointing to the cottage. "Go up that path and you will see her and my brother Fred. I

would go with you, but I must wash the nets and hang them up to dry." And he kept on down to the beach, still wondering what business the man could have that concerned them.

He lost no time in completing his work; then he ran up to the cottage, but found only Fred within.

"Where is mother?" he asked.

"In the grape arbor. A stranger called to see her on business."

"Did he say what business?"

"No, but it must be important, judging by the many papers he spread out on the arbor table."

"I met him, but I don't like his looks," commented Leo. "He seemed to be a disagreeable fellow; I hope he didn't bring any message that will worry mother. I will go out and see."

"No, no, Leo, stay here till he leaves.

If mother wanted you she would call you. I was with her when he came; and I could see that she wished me to leave. See, now he is going; I will go with you out there."

In the arbor they found their mother with knitting in hand, wearing a sad, anxious look, her kind eyes showing traces of tears.

"What is it, mother?" asked Leo anxiously. "What did the stranger say to make you shed tears; tell us what he said, and we will bring him back to ask your pardon."

"No, no, my dear Leo," and she grasped his hand to detain him, "the man only did his duty in bringing sad news to me; let him go in peace."

"But, mother, tell us what it is. Why should it be kept from us? Can't we be trusted?" the boys urged.

"My dear boys, whom could I trust if not you? But I dread clouding your young lives with a trouble in which you can give no help; but since you must know, I might as well tell you now as later. A hard-hearted man has robbed us of what is rightfully ours. It was the property of your father. Besides he brought a bill against me—an unjust charge, which, if I am forced to pay, will rob us of our home."

The boys were shocked at hearing this; they were silent for a moment, then Fred asked with trembling voice, "Can he rob us? Is the law on his side?"

"Yes, Freddie, he has the power, but not the right; the law favored him, and we are unable to prove our right. If they take this little home, the garden will go with it; and also the inclosure

adjoining it, where your dear father lies. What a grief to us if we can no longer sit by his grave, or place there the flowers he loved."

"No mother; you shall never be robbed of this dear home. Tell us who the people are that would attempt it."

"As you know, your father was a sailor, and you have heard us speak of the little house he owned in Bremen. You were too young to remember the pride he took in improving it, and the fine vegetable garden which he took much delight in cultivating.

"You have heard us speak of his good boat, which earned our support by traffic on the river. With his dwelling and his boat, he was satisfied that he was keeping his family in comfort, and did not crave change.

"But a cousin whom he had known

and loved from boyhood advised him to join with him in the purchase of an ocean-going vessel, thus engaging in a more extensive business, and the two went into partnership.

"The cousin was prepared to advance his part of the purchase money without making any sacrifice; but your father had to sell not only his boat, but our house in Bremen. This he did not regret, for the business was greatly increased, and in a short time he was able to buy this little place which, for the time, he had only rented.

"You, Leo, were seven years old then, and Fred five; and many happy years have we passed here. Your father was taken ill; the business had to be entrusted to other hands, then there was a terrible storm and the vessel was wrecked.

"When the message came to your father on his sick-bed, he was greatly troubled, but did not lose all hope. 'The loss may not be so great,' he said, after recovering a little from the shock; 'the vessel and its cargo were fully insured. When I get well, I can put my share of the insurance money into some business; and in time recover the loss.'

"But this was not to be; shortly afterward God called him home. That was a terrible blow. You were too young to understand our great loss, and it was only the realization of my duty to you that kept me from despair. But this was not all; the Lord put me to another trial, one that I had never expected.

"Your father had comforted himself and me in the belief that one-half of

the insurance money would be ours; he had no other thought. After he had passed away, I waited many weeks to hear from his cousin and partner. Receiving no message, I wrote him, making inquiry.

"After a time I received a harsh, gruff reply, to the effect that it was he and he alone who had the vessel insured; that your father's name was not on the papers, and that he had no legal claim to any part of the insurance money.

"He added that there were several debts which your father should have paid but now that he was gone, he would not press them upon me, so long as I refrained from annoying him with groundless claims.

"Upon receiving that letter I thought it advisable to consult a law-

yer, and went to see an old trusted friend of your father, Lawyer Copeland in Bremen. I told him the whole story, but he gave me but little encouragement that I could demand anything unless I had proof in writing, attested by witnesses that the vessel was bought and insured in partnership.

" 'The man is a rascal,' was his comment, 'It is not at all likely that the vessel was insured without my friend Berryman joining in it; had he lived, he would have seen to it, but his death has given the thief a chance to lay claim to all. He has it, and will keep it.'

"As you see, my children, I could do nothing in regard to the insurance, and had to bear the loss as patiently as possible; but now another trial has come. The man who has just left was sent by the cousin to tell me that when buying

the vessel he had loaned your father three hundred dollars which was never paid back to him. He sent word by the man that if this claim is not paid, he would attach this house and all that belongs to it, and sell them to satisfy his claim. If this is done, we will be turned out into the street."

"No, mother, that shall never happen so long as Fred and I live. The boat and nets are mine, he cannot take them. Tell me the name of the cousin and repeat the name of the attorney; I will see him to-morrow."

"The cousin's name is Holbrook, and the lawyer's name is Copeland. His office is near the Court House."

"Now it is all clear to me, mother; I wish you had told me this before; it might perhaps have kept Holbrook from annoying you by demanding the

three hundred. You have often told us that God will not let falsehood triumph over truth; so the house and garden will not be taken from us; you can count upon that."

The mother saw no way in which Leo could help, but she was cheered by his cheerfulness, and began to hope that something might be done. The three chatted for a time, then returned to the cottage and the evening lamp, until time to retire.

CHAPTER II.

LAWYER COPELAND.

The next day Leo went to Bremen, sold his fish in the market, getting the three dollars he had expected for the cod—the smaller fish being equally well paid for. Then he made his way to the office of Lawyer Copeland to ask his advice in regard to the demand of Cousin Holbrook.

"That case was before me more than nine years ago," commented the attorney; Holbrook's lawyer won the suit by trickery and fraud; the only one who could have combated the false oaths that won it was your father; and he was dead; but I will undertake the case, Leo, and do the best I can to help you get at least part of that insurance

money. It may be that Holbrook has repented of that piece of rascality, although his claim for the three hundred does not lessen the impression that money looks as good to him now as ever.

"Should he bring suit, his false oath may win his case again; but if so, you would lose no more than if no effort were made."

"What will it cost us if he should bring suit and win?" asked Leo anxiously.

"Win or lose, it shall cost you nothing," replied the lawyer. "I will take care of the costs; your father did me many acts of kindness which I will return to his family, should opportunity offer. I doubt that he will bring suit. The other case brought him no credit; but he may harass you for payment of the three hundred dollars."

"Grafton, the market man, told me to-day," said Leo, "that Yarnsworth, the rich shipping merchant, is fitting out a whaling vessel to sail for Greenland. He has secured all his sailors but one, and gives three hundred dollars in gold—I will go if he will take me."

"My boy, would you leave home and mother to face the bitter cold, the dangers of whaling, the ice-bergs, and the polar bears?"

"Yes, I would risk it to help my mother out of all this anxiety."

"But listen, boy; I am interested in you. You are a little man, but you are too young to make that terrible voyage, and risk so many dangers. Who would care for your mother in your absence?"

"My brother Fred; he is a strong

boy of seventeen; he will look after mother all right."

"But I fear she would be terribly anxious about you. Remember, whaling on the coast of Greenland will be no picnic. I am afraid you would bitterly rue the adventure when too late."

"No, I won't mind it. I could then save our home and keep mother from worrying."

"Well, there is nothing to prevent your going; and I will do all I can to help you. But suppose you never return."

"I have considered that too, but my mother always impressed upon Freddie and me that our lives are in God's hands; and I believe firmly that if God wills it, and I go in His name, He will take care of me."

"That is the right way to look at it.

Taking it for granted that there is a place for you on the ship, we must fit you out. I am not blessed with riches, but I promise you that your mother will not lose her home while you are away. I will go with you to see Yarnsworth, I am well acquainted with him and will speak for you."

"Oh thank you, thank you! I would not know what to say for myself."

"Nor would I, at your age."

Followed by Leo, the lawyer passed through the crowd at the entrance of the shipping office, went into an inner room where Yarnsworth was found busy at his desk.

"Ho, Copeland, what fair wind drove you here?" he exclaimed, rising and grasping the hand of his friend, while he nodded to Leo.

"A breeze from Greenland; and I

come to ask you to take a glance at my young friend, Leo Berryman; isn't he a fine-looking lad, as fit as any you ever set eyes on?"

"He surely is, and you doubtless have an object in view. What can I do for him?"

"This young man is our friend Berryman's eldest son. He wants to go on your whaler."

"Well, young man," said the shipping merchant, "do you think you could weather a polar trip? The other thirty-five are older and this is not their first voyage."

"I am for trying," said Leo stoutly.

"Will you vouch for him, Copeland?"

"I surely will;" and the two passed to a corner of the room to talk over the details.

"Yes, the boy shall have a place on the Dolphin, and I may as well pay him the $300.00 now as later." Turning to Leo, the merchant spoke, "You are a dutiful son. I will pay you three hundred in cash to keep that villain Holbrook from annoying your poor mother while you are gone."

The Dolphin sets sail to-morrow at noon," the merchant continued. "I am expecting Captain Bertram every minute. Oh, there he is! Come in, Bertram," and they went forward to meet him.

A strong, broad-shouldered man with ruddy face and cordial smile, a typical seaman, entered, shook hands all round, then waited to be questioned by the shipping merchant.

"How about the crew, Captain, have you the full quota?"

"All but one."

"Here is that one, Captain; one of Copeland's choosing; come and inspect him."

The Captain stepped up to Leo and clasped his hand warmly.

"Rather young," he said, "but looks strong and capable. — Have you ever been a sailor?"

"No, but I will not disappoint you. I must first see my mother though, before I promise to go. I am her supporter."

"Then how can you leave her and go to sea?"

"My brother Fred will take care of her the same as I have done."

"Remember, we sail to-morrow noon. Can you see her in time?"

"Yes, the vessel will pass within a short distance of our home; I will go

aboard there." Leo described the spot where the wessel could pick him up.

"Very well! But are you provided with clothing for an Arctic winter?"

Leo flushed painfully as he explained that he had no clothing except what he was wearing, and a few pieces of underwear at home.

"Go to Greenland in a linen jacket!" exclaimed Captain Bertram. You would freeze to death before you were halfway."

Leo turned pale at hearing this. The case seemed hopeless, and tears filled his eyes. But Captain Bertram was equal to the occasion; Leo had won his respect, and he resolved to keep him.

"See here, Yarnsworth," he said to the shipping merchant, who was conversing with the lawyer. "I hope you will be generous enough to furnish this

boy with the needed clothing for the voyage. I will stand for it."

"Captain, you know exactly what he requires. Tell us who your outfitter is and I will do the rest."

The captain led the way, and they found a full supply of clothing for the whaling expedition ready to be sent on board.

"Listen, my boy," said Captain Bertram, when they were alone, "I could not object to your going on the Arctic voyage while in the shipping merchant's office, as he knew how anxious I was to secure another seaman; but I felt it my duty to impress upon you that whaling is not like trapping rabbits. If you want to go to sea, go on some other ship. You have no idea of the hardships of an Arctic voyage. Take my advice, my boy, and don't go on the Dolphin."

"But I dare not change my plan, too much depends upon it. I am used to water and fishing, and no matter what employment I could get, I would have to learn it; there is nothing for me to do here, and I love the sea."

"Well, do as you like; I have nothing more to say, only I fear you will rue it."

"No, I am doing this to help my mother, and would not regret making the effort."

"Boy, you say too much depends upon this journey for you to stay at home; do you mind telling a true friend what it is; I see that Copeland knows so it cannot be a secret."

"Well, you have a right to know." And he told him of the unjust claim.

"I never imagined anything like that as your motive for taking this whaling

trip. I only supposed that you, like many boys, longed for adventure in the far North, or wanted to get away from the control of your parents. Now that I know the real state of the case I assure you that you may count upon me as a true friend. Now I must go and put things to rights on the Dolphin. Good-bye!" He hurried off, and Leo went to his boat and rowed down the river towards home.

CHAPTER III.

FRED'S ADVICE.

The afternoon was past and evening had come when Leo, rowing at full speed, was approaching his cottage home.

Many experiences had been his that afternoon, most of them new and entirely unexpected. He had suffered anxieties of varied kinds, and from varied sources; he had found friends where least expected, helping him in every possible way, when they realized his reason for taking so long and dangerous a voyage.

Obstacles which he had not even thought of had been removed as if by magic; he had found helpful friends

in persons of whom he had never known until that hour.

Through it all, his mother was first in his thoughts. How would his going affect her; would the knowledge that by his going her possession of the home would be assured compensate for his absence or atone for his loss, should he never return?

And Fred; the brothers had never been separated for more than a day, would they grieve for each other's company, when far apart?

How would he accustom himself to the change from a rowboat to a seafaring vessel with a strange and rough crew?

Would he tell Fred, when he came down to the boat to see him off, and let him tell his mother?

He dreaded her tears when told, and

her pleading not to leave her and home to go on such a hazardous voyage and risk his life to save the place for her.

No, he could not tell her, for fear she would persuade him to remain at home, and break faith with the friends who had helped him even to supplying him with a full outfit of suitable clothing for the expedition.

There is so little time, he reflected; I must tell her without delay. The whole plan had matured so suddenly that he felt almost bewildered; then what would it be to her?

He reached the landing place, tied the boat and went up to the cottage, where he found the table set for the frugal evening meal, his mother waiting for him, and Fred sitting by the light, mending the nets.

It was a picture of peaceful home-

life. This may be the last time that I share it, Leo said to himself with a feeling of bitter anger against Holbrook for breaking up the home circle.

They gathered about the evening meal, Leo trying to speak cheerfully of his visit to the city, his successful sale of the fish, and his pleasant meeting with Lawyer Copeland. He struggled to appear natural, but his mother noticed his effort to seem cheerful and attributed it to the consultation with the lawyer and the unsuccessful effort to get their just returns from cousin Holbrook. She asked no questions, but would wait until the next day when he would be rested.

Bed time came, the cuckoo in the old fashioned clock had proclaimed the hour of ten; the three arose to retire, the mother noticing that Leo's eyes were tearful.

"Tell me, my son, what is troubling you?" she asked.

"Mother, it seems to me that pleasure is always accompanied by sorrow, to-morrow you will know what I mean."

"I am sure there is nothing wrong; my son would do no one any harm."

"Not that, mother, but there is something that may trouble you. It was not my wish to give you anxiety, and I am sure my Heavenly Father will think I did right."

"Then I need not worry. If you meant well, and things did not turn out as you expected, there is nothing to complain of. Go to bed and sleep well, and in the morning you may tell me all."

"Yes, that is best, Fred and I are going out fishing a little earlier than usual. Good night, dear mother. He

pressed a kiss upon her forehead; then the three sought their nightly rest, each having knelt in evening prayer.

The sun had just risen the next morning, when Leo and Fred arose, dressed and went quietly down the path to the river.

"You may go ahead, Fred; I have a little writing to do. You can take the nets with you."

The morning was clear and beautiful, the waves glistening in the sunlight, all nature fresh and balmy from the repose of the night.

Leo wrote a note to leave for his mother, explaining in loving terms his intention of leaving home that day at noon to go on a whaling expedition to the coast of Greenland on the Dolphin. The note was to be left in Fred's care and delivered after the Dolphin set sail.

With tear-dimmed eyes he wrote that he could not subject his beloved mother and himself to the trial of parting, but would go quietly away, leaving Fred to give her the account of his visit to Bremen, especially the kindness of Lawyer Copeland, the shipping merchant, and Captain Bertram.

Then, with tender farewells, he folded it, put it in his pocket and ran down the path to the boat.

"This is a good spot, Leo," remarked Fred when they had rowed a short distance. "We did well here yesterday."

"Yes," replied Leo in an absent-minded manner. Here, Fred, is a note I want you to give to mother after I am gone."

"After you are gone!" exlaimed Fred in blank astonishment, "why, where are you going?"

"There is a note for mother, read it and give it to her when you return."

Fred unfolded the note, tried to read it, but was so perplexed and amazed that he failed to take in its full meaning.

"What will mother say?" he asked.

"As you know, Fred, I have not said anything to her of my going, I think it better for her and for myself not to speak of it. You tell her after I am gone, and give her the note. You tell her that the three hundred dollars I will earn will save our home."

"Certainly she should know your object in going; but, oh, it will be a cruel thing for you to slip off without saying farewell. No, you must come back with me first."

"But the parting would unnerve us both, she would weep and plead with

me not to go; but I *must* go, and my last hour at home would be one I would wish to forget."

"But you would remember it with keener regret for having kept your going a secret from mother. No, Leo, you must tell her all."

"Oh, Fred, if I only could know what effect it will have upon her!"

"I know. She considers whatever happens as God's will and is reconciled to it. She will be reconciled to parting with you, knowing that He rules and you are in His care; so tell her all and receive her blessing upon your journey."

"Oh, Freddie, you are looking at it in the right way; I thank you for advising me; I believe I would have regretted it, had I gone off without telling her."

"Leo, you are doing nobly to take this dangerous voyage; but mother will feel that you are in God's care, and you and I must have the same trust in God and look forward to your home-coming.

We will miss you terribly, brother, but I am sure that mother will not sadden your last day at home too much."

"I know it. And we are going to have a little farewell party. Here we have several fine fish. In a short time mother will have a dish of nicely cooked fish to go with coffee and fresh brown bread."

They were not disappointed. All went as Fred predicted; and although the thought of separation was in the minds of the boys they gave no hint of it until the meal was finished, the room put in order and they sat on the

little porch, their favorite place of rest and talk.

Then Leo with a slight tremor in his voice told his mother all; and his heart rejoiced that while she was surprised and tearful she was not overcome by the unexpected news. She listened quietly while he told her all that transpired during his visit with Lawyer Copeland in Bremen.

It was with sincere pleasure she learnt that Captain Bertram was to command the vessel; he and her husband had been long-time friends; he would be like a father to her boy; and Copeland's kindness filled her with heartfelt gratitude. He too was a dear friend of their beloved father.

Of her own anxiety and the loss of his companionship she made no mention; her boy was in God's care; she

would trust him there, and in her quiet home pray for his safe return.

As they were exchanging words of farewell the signal of the Dolphin was heard in the distance. Leo clasped his mother in his arms as he kissed her farewell, and her blessing was given in a voice that she strove to keep calm. So they parted; she stood watching him go on board, and he waved to her a last farewell. So the Dolphin was on its way to Greenland.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WHITE FLAG.

"Welcome to the Dolphin, my boy," said Captain Bertram, laying his hand kindly upon Leo's shoulder. "Do not regret the step you have taken; with God's help we will be back in these waters again in a few months and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have done a good deed. Let that thought keep you from being downhearted, and look forward to a joyous home-coming; but if you regret the step you have taken, you shall have a chance to return."

"Oh, no, Captain, I do not regret it. I have done what I thought best. I have no wish to return."

"Well said; I am glad to have you with us. Come with me and I will introduce you to Mr. Martin, our pilot. At first he will appear harsh and rough; but a kinder man or braver seaman never stepped upon the boards of any ship. Come, my boy."

Leo followed. At the wheel he saw a broad-shouldered man, a typical seaman, in tarpaulin jacket and with a felt hat shading his kind gray eyes.

His face, bronzed to the color of mahogany by the sun of the tropics, and the hardships of the Arctic regions, gave token that life to him had been no pleasure trip. He welcomed the newcomer on the Dolphin with a cordial clasp of the hand, and a glance of approval.

"Well, my boy; so you are going to be a seaman, like your father. I knew

him, and a better man never sailed upon my vessel. The captain has given me a good account of you. We will be friends, for I am sure you are not a trifler or a shirker. With us you will find plenty of work night and day; and you must strictly obey all commands. But there will be times when no eye is watching you, that will be your best chance to prove yourself trustworthy."

Leo pressed the hand of the pilot. "I will gladly comply with your commands. If I fail in my work I will expect no favor," he said.

Very good, my boy! If you are only half as good as you look, it is all I ask."

"Why are you watching the shore so closely?" asked Martin, "are you homesick already?"

"My brother Fred promised to put a white cloth on the weather vane on

our roof, to let me know that mother is watching the Dolphin as long as it is in sight. I see our cottage but I can't see the white flag."

"You do not see the white flag! Well, we still have two hours of daylight; go aloft, and bring my telescope; may be that will help you."

Leo obeyed promptly; Martin adjusted the spy glass and he could now see the cottage but no flag. Yes, his eye dwelt fondly on the most loved spot upon earth. Clearly he saw white walls, the green vines running up the window frames, and the read tiles upon the roof; he almost believed that he could see his mother in her black dress on the porch in the shade of the great linden. But he could not see the white flag.

"No sign that they are watching,"

he said in a depressed tone, as he handed the telescope back; "I thought they would watch."

"Oh, you land-lubber!" laughed the pilot setting the glass with the skill of a seaman, "the white flag is floating merrily in the breeze. Now look again and you will see your mother."

"Dear mother, I see you!" Leo exclaimed overjoyed at the sight. "You are following me with your eye, and with your blessing," he added as tears stole into his eyes.

"I am glad for you, my boy, you are happier than I was the first time I went to sea. I was alone in the world. There was no one to watch for my going or my return," said the pilot.

CHAPTER V.

AN INTERESTED LISTENER.

The wind was favorable; the sun shone brightly, and the crew was singing their outgoing ditty, while the Dolphin, true to its name, sped over the waves.

Martin was glad to see that the shadow caused by parting from home and loved ones was leaving the naturally cheerful features of his young helper, and told him little incidents of sea life.

Captain Bertram and Martin were not the only friends of Leo on the vessel; the sailors, who at first had been jealous of the favoritism shown him, became more genial when they noticed

that he was not spoiled by this partiality, but kept strictly to duty, and was courteous and respectful to all.

They saw, as did the pilot, that he was eager to learn whatever was in his line of duty and willing to help wherever needed.

One night Martin and Leo had the watch. It was a beautiful clear night, the moon lighting the waves in silvery splendor, the Dolphin speeding along as if rejoicing in the beauty of the scene.

An assistant was at the wheel. Martin and Leo went to another part of the boat, where they would be alone with each other. They took up a position where they could converse and yet keep watch.

Absorbed in conversation, they did not notice that a sailor who had been

walking to and fro had lain down on a coil of rope, turned his face to the sea and appeared to be asleep.

"Leo, my boy," said Martin, "I have been wanting to ask you for some time what caused you to make this trip. The Captain told me something, but I don't know if I got the straight of it."

Leo was glad to speak of it. At a certain point in the story Martin broke in:

"Oh, that swindler Holbrook! Yes, I know the whole history of it; your father was commander of the Uranus, and for a time I was his helper. A better man never sailed. But before the Uranus was lost, I was steersman on a ship sailing to the East Indies, so I knew nothing of it for a time. It was during that time that the scoundrel got the insurance money. The shame

of it! To steal the sole support of a widow with two helpless children!"

"Yes, Martin, that was bad enough," continued Leo, "but that is not all. He tries now to get more money from mother. That is what drove me to make this voyage."

"You astonish me!" exclaimed the pilot. "How could he force you to do that?"

Leo told him of cousin Holbrook's demand for the three hundred dollars.

"Three hundred dollars after claiming all the insurance money from the wrecked vessel!" commented Martin. "That is infamous even in a thief; first robbing her of her money, then trying to deprive her of her home!"

"I honor you, my boy, for trying to save it for her. We will see what can be done if the Lord lets us return to

Bremen safely. I have influential friends here, who can and will make the rogue give up his ill-gotten gains, and then give him his due. We will see what explanation he can make in the presence of the witnesses I can bring. The Lord sent you on this voyage to bring this affair to light. Your journey in the Arctics will not be in vain, my boy. Just you wait."

"But I fear you will try in vain. The swindle was so cleverly done that Copeland himself failed in his effort to win the case for mother.

"We will see!" muttered the old pilot composedly. "Justice is on the side of your mother, and God will see that she shall not suffer.

"We will see if the testimony of several honest seamen and others will not

have more weight than a piece of paper that any villain can prepare."

At that moment there was a stir on the coil of rope; a sailor aroused the apparent sleeper and took his place.

"All right," responded Conrad sleepily, yawning as if awakened from unconscious repose, while Martin said to himself, "No matter what he overheard, it is all true."

Conrad having overheard every word, reflected to himself, "What he said of my father is true, but not all; he is greedy but he is no swindler. But why did he want that three hundred after the business was settled?"

Crosing his arms, he leaned back upon a beam, looked far out over the sea and reflected over what he had overheard. He was making plans for the future.

The hours passed, and Martin touched the sailor as he passed. He stopped.

"Who is on watch to-night besides us three?

"Conrad Holbrook and Ernest Bohme."

"Why didn't I suspect it was Holbrook?" said the pilot after the sailor had passed. "Now he has heard the whole story. Well it may take him down a bit to know of our informing on his father when we return. Meanwhile Conrad was reflecting. "The pilot and that boy will never get back if I can help it," he vowed to himself.

"But, Martin," said Leo after a pause, " this Holbrook may not be a son of the man who cheated my mother. A rich man would not let his boy go on this dangerous expedition and as a

plain seaman at that, when he might be giving orders on a ship of his own."

"Yes, if he were so grasping; but I know why the old fox put him here, it is to learn the art of whaling. Next year he may fit out a whaling vessel with Conrad as captain. Be that as it may, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. The son is the second edition of the father."

"But would Captain Bertram have taken the boy knowing that Holbrook is his father?"

"Well, we can't be sure he is. Let us ask him?"

Martin crossed the deck to where Conrad was standing; Leo followed.

Conrad noticed their coming but wished to appear unconcerned; so he did not look up until Martin spoke.

"Were you sleeping?" asked the pi-

lot sharply. "Watch out, my boy, or we may give you still more rope. What is your name?"

"Conrad Holbrook."

"Where from?"

"Hamburg."

"Have you always lived there?"

"I was born there."

"Very well; now take care to keep awake; look out for yourself; this is no pleasure trip."

"Now, Martin, you see I was right" — commented Leo as they left, "he is not from Bremen so he must be of another Holbrook family."

"If so, I am glad of it. I should hate to be on the same ship with the son of that villain in Bremen. Now your watch is finished; go to your bunk, and forget all we have said. Sleep well until I call you."

Leo went below and Martin continued the watch, reflecting over all he had heard, and scarcely convinced that the sailor was not the son of the man who had cheated the widow and her sons of their property.

CHAPTER VI

UNEXPECTED SUCCESS.

When Conrad Holbrook's watch was past, he went to his hammock, but could not sleep because of anxiety of mind in regard to his father's shady deal.

He did not feel the heart-grief which a son would naturally feel for a father who was honest and honorable; nor the same desire to defend him, his only feeling being one of disgrace. He had always known that his father coveted money, but believed him, when he claimed that Captain Berryman had no part in the insurance; and while Conrad did not think it right and just, he was very willing to share in the

insurance money, had his father offered it, which was not done. But it was in his father's hands, and there it would remain, if he could prevent the pilot and Leo from returning to Bremen; thus his father's fraud would never be exposed.

But how could he prevent their returning except by taking their lives? He shuddered at the thought. No, he would rather bear disgrace than have such a terrible crime upon his conscience.

In one of his musings he decided to go home and plead with his father to give up part of the money to the rightful owner. If this were done, Martin and Leo, and everyone else might forget the wrong; and his father be respected by them as an honest man.

But that good impulse lasted but for

a moment. He doubted that his father would listen to him.

"No, he will not agree to it, I am sure; his heart is so set on money." He called to mind that his father sent him out in the world very young. When only fourteen, he bound him as cabin boy on a West India trading vessel. When after two years he ventured to return home, his father met him with angry words, and drove him out to make his own way in the world.

Hearing of the Dolphin's intended voyage he asked for a position and received it, planning to earn enough in whaling to secure a position on land.

With this in view he did his duty, but not cheerfully. He took no real interest in his work, or in the companionship or amusements of the other sailors.

The outbound trip proved to be a long and tedious voyage. Captain and men rejoiced when at length they reached the waters frequented by whales, and began keep a keen look-out for the dark backs of the monsters to appear.

Leo was not idle; from morning until night he scanned the sea. Often he climbed the rope ladders, hoping for the sight of a whale. The other sailors were equally eager. The old pilot warned them time and again against taking foolish risks, while glad to see them so interested.

Had Leo been his own son, Martin could not have taken more pride in him. He hoped the good luck which had always followed the Dolphin would not desert it now; but weeks passed and no whale had yet been sighted.

Captain Bertram was vexed and anxious over the delay; the sailors lost their jollity, and even Martin grew somewhat depressed as he waited day after day for a whale to heave in sight.

"We cannot stand this much longer, Martin," said the Captain at the wheel one morning; "scarcely a month left for us to do the job. If we don't catch up, we stand a fair chance of being fast up here for the winter. That would cost us a good round sum."

"True, Captain, but what can we do? First sight your whale, before you catch him."

"No, Martin, but wishing will not bring him. I cannot stand this idleness and suspense any longer. I have thought of a plan: suppose we steer for Spitzbergen."

Martin glanced at the face of the speaker for a moment in mute surprise.

"Captain, do you realize it is almost time to return?"

"It is always time to return if we do nothing. Martin, we *must* accomplish something."

"I know it. Well begun is half done. The trick is to start. If we use our time well, two sea-boys at least will be in our hold before we sail for home. But we have no time to lose.

"No, Martin, turn northward at once."

This was done; the sails were spread to the breeze, and as the "Dolphin" ploughed its way through the waves, a cheer went up from the sailors; all knowing that it was very late in the season to go farther north, but one and all would take any risk rather than re-

turn with nothing to show for their trip.

Hours and days passed with not a whale in sight.

"No use, Captain," said Martin one day, "our luck has deserted us. There is nothing left to do but to return home without a cargo."

"Don't despair, Martin, until we have given Spitzbergen a trial. We must give them no chance to say we didn't do our best. It shall not be our fault if we fail."

"Yes, but I have a presentiment that this is our unlucky voyage."

They were nearing Spitzbergen and saw icebergs in the distance sailing slowly and gracefully, their tops glistening in the rays of the sun.

"Leo," said Martin, "I haven't slept

soundly for many a night. You take the wheel while I go below for a nap, but call me if an iceberg is nearing the ship."

Gladly Leo took the place, but Martin had scarcely turned in when there was a joyous call from the mast-head, "Whales, whales, a school of them!"

"Where, where!" called the pilot, springing from his cot and up the hatchway.

"Northwest; two, three, five. They are spouting like fountains!"

Shouts of rejoicing were heard on all sides; the men lounging in their hammocks sprang out. "Harpoons! harpoons!" was the call. "We'll win out, captain; "we'll come out all right," Martin called out cheerfully.

It was a scene of joyous confusion. While the captain and pilot were plan-

ning the attack, the sailors were going over points which had been many times discussed while waiting and hoping.

Martin assigned the crews for each of the seven boats, each in charge of a skilled harpoonist. "Leo, you stay with me, and you may try your hand at throwing a harpoon," he said turning to him, and the boy's heart thrilled with pleasure. Captain Bertram approved of Martin's plans. The oars were put in motion, while Leo, his face flushed with delight, was keenly observing.

"Be careful, my boy," said Martin, "not to get your feet tangled in the rope when throwing the harpoon. The whale would drag you in at the next dive. You must have your wits about you when whale-fishing."

While Martin was giving instruc-

tions the boats had got within cable length of a whale. Conrad Holbrook and the others in the boat were eagerly watching the chance for a throw.

"Now notice, Leo, how I grasp the harpoon. Keep your eyes on the object when throwing."

"I see a fine fellow—fifty or sixty feet long, we will try to make his acquaintance. Boys, row closer, but not too near, so he can strike you with his tail. Now, Leo, throw!"

Leo hurled the harpoon with such sure aim that it sank deeply into the flesh of the whale. The monster lashed the water with terrific force, then dived. Meanwhile the other harpoons had quickly followed that of Leo. The sailor watched for the whale to rise, when there was a cry of alarm.

"What is it?" asked Martin turning quickly.

"Leo overboard;" they cried in concert.

"Merciful heaven! The poor boy is lost! Never mind the whale! Save the boy!"

Every one in the boat watched the spot where he sank. Presently a pale face appeared above the water some distance away; Martin sprang overboard, swam to him, carried him on one arm as he swam back to the boat, where outstretched arms were eager to help.

"I am all right now, Martin," said Leo feebly. "Where is my harpoon?"

The pilot's face beamed when he heard again the sound of the boy's voice and he responded cheerfully,

"No need now for harpoons; the lances will finish him when he comes up to breathe for the last time."

"All goes well, Martin!" called the sailors jubilantly. "You have saved the life which this fellow would have destroyed."

"Let all the boats close in; each man to his spear!"

The whale appeared again, now in his death struggle, lashing the water until it foamed.

Again and again he dived but came more quickly to the surface. At the last rising he turned on his back to dive no more.

Three joyous cheers were given by the sailors, the white flag was run up and fluttered in the breeze.

"Boys," said Martin, "you have done a good day's work. I am proud of you. Only one accident, but the boy is safe. Let us give three cheers for Leo!"

All joined in but Conrad Holbrook.

This Martin noticed and turning to him, he said,

"Now, Holbrook, you were right on the spot where Leo fell overboard, how did it happen?"

"I didn't see him fall; I was looking at the whale."

Martin made no reply except to gaze steadily at him for a moment. Conrad could see that he was not believed, and his face flushed.

"I will keep an eye on that fellow," Martin said to himself as he turned away. "It's old Holbrook over again; he doesn't tell all he knows."

In the meantime Conrad was saying to himself; "Maybe I did put the oar where he would trip over it and fall."

The seven boats gathered about the dead whale, and it was decided to tow it to the ship to cut it up. They would

secure a good supply of oil and whale-bone, and would attack another whale the next day, feeling that they must secure at least two as the result of their voyage in order not to be disappointed.

Huge chains were put around the neck and tail of the prize, and it was towed to the side of the ship. There the head was separated from the body and hoisted upon deck, a real labor, for it was a heavy load. From it they got a great quantity of oil, and from the jaws the whale-bone; then the fastenings were cut away and what was left of the head was rolled overboard.

When they were ready to cut up the body, they made a platform on the side of the ship upon which the sailors stood while they cut out the blubber or fat of which there was a great quantity. This

was then cut to pieces, and boiled in great pots, to extract the oil.

It required several days to do this work, but only part of the sailors remained to finish it; the others rowing away to secure the second whale.

When all the blubber was cut out, the body was cut loose, and rolled into the sea to be eaten by sharks and other denizens of the deep.

They were successful in getting the second one, and were kept busy for some time filling the cans in the hold with fine oil.

CHAPTER VII.

A BEAR HUNT.

Three weeks passed, and in that time the "Dolphin" had captured several whales. She had now a full cargo, and was ready to sail after making some repairs.

For this purpose the ship was at anchor near the coast of Spitzbergen. With light hearts the crew obeyed the captain's command to inspect every part of the ship, that it might be in perfect seaworthy condition before sailing.

One evening Martin, Leo, and Conrad Holbrook were on the upper deck, talking over their home-going, neither imagining that it would be many long and dreary days before their hope would be realized.

The next day the weather was cold, but clear; and the boys rejoiced in the beauty of the mountains, their ice crests sparkling in the rays of the sun, contrasting with the deep blue of the sky.

"It is all beautiful, beautiful!" said Leo, as the pilot came up and stood beside him.

"Yes, my boy, all nature is beautiful; the work of our great Creator, and even this scene of ice and snow is beautiful in its way."

"Yes, Martin, but so lifeless; so dead and unfruitful; no grass, no tree to lift its green crown above the snow and ice; no bird sings as it passes on its way; no butterfly goes from flower to flower, not a bee to lay in its store of honey."

"Not lifeless, my boy, far from it; the polar bear roams over this ice-cov-

ered plain to find food; walrusses swarm on the coast, seals and sea-lions, foxes and rabbits, sport around in spite of the bitter Arctic weather. Nor are birds entirely missing; some of them closely resembling southern birds in plumage. There are sea gulls, the stormy petrel, the great white owl — which makes the rocks echo with its wild cry. Furthermore the Arctic sea is swarming with fish of many kinds; so you see, my boy, there is life in abundance. Just now I see a polar bear springing from one block of ice to another."

"I see it! I see it! Martin; a little bear is following. If we could only catch them both!"

"Well, perhaps we can," and Martin's experienced eyes followed the movements of the mother bear; "I see

a fair chance to add a dish of bear meat to our fare. "Captain Bertram, a word with you," he called as he caught sight of him.

"What is it, pilot?" he asked as he drew near.

"Leo and I have spotted a bear; if we could secure her, we would not only have a fine skin, but a good supply of meat for the table; what do you think of it, captain?"

"I certainly have no objection; the main thing is to get her. Where is she now?"

"Right at the mouth of that gorge."

"Yes, I see her, a fine animal with fur almost as white as the snow. The skin alone is worth the risk. What help do you want?"

Leo and Holbrook will be enough; just see to it that we get rifles and a

harpoon, and I will answer for the rest."

"But suppose you miss fire, Martin, think of the danger."

"That's all right. Leo will be on hand, and he will have the harpoon."

The captain went to his cabin and returned with three good rifles, powder and balls. Martin sprang into the best boat, followed by two oarsmen. Provided with three good harpoons, they were ready to move off, when the captain called.

"Ho, Martin, better wait a while to see what that cloud in the west means; it may bode a sudden snow storm."

Martin glanced around, then expressed the opinion that there was nothing to dread, at least for some time.

"Before that snow-storm gets here,

captain, we will be back with our prize. But in case it does come—throw us the wolf-robe. It might be needed."

The robe was tossed into the boat and the three started in pursuit of the bear.

Each of the three hunters picked up a rifle, and Martin stepped from the boat followed by the others.

"All's well," said the pilot, "the bear is on an ice floe, keenly interested in a seal in a wake, which she intends for herself and her young. We must get within fifty feet before we give battle. Be very careful not to wound the young one, or her rage will be unbounded. I will fire the first shot; the second, Leo; and if need be, Holbrook, you give her the third dose."

They had gone but a short distance when Martin halted. "Here, Holbrook,

you stop here, and head her off at this point; Leo and I can manage the rest."

Conrad promised to keep guard; and Martin and Leo, weapons in hand, and flat upon the ice floe, crept toward the bear, which stood motionless, gazing down the rent in the ice. Now she scented danger, raised her head, and gave a growl to warn her young.

"Go lightly, Leo," said Martin when both arose; "if the ice crunches, she will hear it; and keep a snow heap between you and the bear, whenever possible."

The cub frisked about, heedless of danger; it had not a thought of hunters being near, but ran to its mother and back again like a child at play.

"A young bear is duller than a sheep," whispered Martin, as the two were lying on the ice-floe; "Look out

for yourself, Leo," warned Martin, "in two minutes she will be here. Have your gun ready."

Leo's nerves were in good condition, but the appearance of a polar bear close at hand caused his arm to tremble as he raised the weapon to take aim at the head of the animal, about thirty paces away.

"Shoot, Leo, or we are lost; I will second it."

Leo's shot felled the bear, but it sprang up and attacked Martin, who fell upon the ice, as if dead. Springing to his feet, Leo seized a harpoon, and threw it with such sure aim that the bear, already weakened, dropped lifeless upon the floe.

"She will not trouble us again;" said Martin jubilantly; "Call Conrad and let us get back to the ship."

"Have you noticed the cloud?" asked Leo. "The sun is hidden, and we can't see where the "Dolphin" is at anchor?"

"Yes, there is a storm brewing. We will not have time to take the meat, just the splendid fur robe, that is enough."

Conrad brought the knives, and speedily the skin was removed in perfect condition. Then a new thought struck Leo. "Martin, let us take the cub with us? It would starve and freeze to death without its mother."

"It surely would. Here, Holbrook, take the knives back, and bring the boat a little nearer."

This order was exactly what Conrad Holbrook had been waiting for; he hurried away, while Martin and Leo went back to the floe to get the little bear. It had gone some distance from the body of its mother, but they secured

it, and then hurried away toward the boat. The boat was gone.

"The scoundrel!" exclaimed Martin with pale lips, "This he has done to keep us from returning to Bremen; but we must save our lives if we can."

The clouds grew darker, the wind more furious, and the cold so severe that they had to keep in motion in order not to freeze stiff. Every so often they shouted, "Boat, ahoy! Boat, ahoy!" But there was no response.

Later in the evening they heard a dull boom sounding over the sea, then another and a third.

"It is the signal gun. They are calling us."

"Yes," answered Martin, "but how can we respond? That scoundrel Holbrook has made up a story that we were killed. We can hear nothing more

from the ship; it sails early in the morning, if not already broken from its moorings by the force of the storm."

They hurried toward the ravine but had not reached it when the snow storm came upon them. The wind was so fierce that walking was almost impossible.

"I cannot go any further," said Leo, sinking to his knees, "save yourself, Martin, and let me die here."

"No, you shall not. I will carry the cub on one arm, and hold you up with the other. Here, take close grip."

Leo tried to reach him but sank exhausted at Martin's feet.

"Stand up, Leo, or in a little while you will be frozen stiff."

"Oh, do let me sleep, Martin, I do so want to sleep."

"But you must not sleep. You would

never wake again. Come, try to walk, and God will give you strength."

He lifted the almost unconscious boy to his feet, held him to his breast with his free arm, reached a shallow ravine, nearly covered by a huge rock. Placing him in the most protected spot, he crept in after him and put the bear between them. In a few minutes the three were comfortable, the bear-skin covering them securely.

"Where am I?" asked Leo, after some hours were passed.

"We are safe in the ravine not far from the spot where the mother bear was left. The little bear and the fur robe has saved our lives."

"Yes, Martin, we saved him, and now he has saved us. But do you think the ship is still at anchor?"

"Yes, if she has not broken away; it

is yet too dark to see over the water; when morning comes we will know."

They could not sleep, but lay listening to a sound which seemed to shake the earth. It was louder than a volley of cannon. It was caused by icebergs breaking from the coast and falling into the sea; this occurs frequently when the violence of storms severs the great masses of ice from their foundation in the glaciers.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONRAD DESERTS HIS FRIENDS.

It was growing light when Martin again spoke. In spite of the howling of the wind he had dropped into sleep.

"Are you awake, Leo?" he asked as the boy stirred.

"Yes, is it morning? Is the storm past?"

"I think so; I hear nothing but the breathing of our young companion; to us, he is worth his weight in gold; he has kept us from freezing to death."

"Can you see the 'Dolphin'?"

"No, we will stay here until we can see better. It is bitterly cold outside; thank God, that the old bear showed us this ravine. It is cold enough, but it keeps out the wind and the snow."

They waited what seemed to them a long time, then both slipped quietly from under the raw pelt, leaving the little bear asleep under it.

They stood outside the ravine, looking over the snow, several feet deep, with small ice-bergs dotting the landscape.

"Mercy on us!" exclaimed Martin, "I see nothing of the 'Dolphin'. It has sailed, or the storm has driven it from its anchorage."

"Oh, my poor mother!" wailed Leo, "Will I never see her again? Have we nothing to hope for, Martin? Certainly when Conrad reached the 'Dolphin' he told the captain where he had left us. Don't you think he will send over to search for us."

"That is impossible, Leo. The snow is too deep, and so light that no one

could get through. We must wait for the snow to harden."

"But how could the captain desert us, you being the pilot and his good friend?"

"Leo, the polar winter has caught us, and every moment the captain tarries threatens shipwreck to the 'Dolphin.' May God stand by us in our need, and give us strength and courage to brave the terror of the Arctic winter in which we have been caught. We are prisoners, my boy, and I have no hope of being set free until summer comes, and the whaling season opens; God help us!"

The old seaman saw no other hope. But with no food, no warmth, how were they to survive the winter? He was tortured with the thought that his foolish plan to go on a hunting expedi-

tion had brought all this upon them. Leo could only think of the grief of his mother when the "Dolphin" should return without him.

"Yes, yes, you poor boy!" said Martin compassionately; "God only knows how I regret bringing you into this frightful position. No father could grieve for his son more than I do for you. With all my power I will strive to keep you from perishing."

"Oh, Martin, we dare not throw all hope away; mother has always instructed Fred and me to look on the bright side, and to remember that God is over all; with courage we can master all things."

"If we went higher up the shore, maybe we could see the 'Dolphin' yet."

"No use, Leo, but we will try it."

"Look, I wonder what that can be?"

said Leo pointing to a heap of snow from which some timbers were projecting.

"I cannot imagine. We did not see anything here yesterday. It must be wreckage blown here from the sea. Let us go and examine it."

They struggled through the deep snow to reach the spot, and scraping away the snow, found the corner of a boat.

"See," said the Pilot, "had I not seen that scoundrel Holbrook running away from us to the 'Dolphin', I would say this is one of our boats, but how did it get here?"

Removing the heavy covering of snow they turned the boat on its side; more snow fell out disclosing a corner of fur belonging to a garment of some kind.

"How did it get here;" and removing the snow, they found the fur coat wrapped about a man. *That man was Conrad Holbrook.*

With a cry of astonishment they looked at him; he was pale, motionless and to all appearances dead.

"The Hand of Justice is upon him;" exclaimed Martin. "He left us to our fate, and God sent him back here to help us by giving us this boat. Conrad could deceive us, but he couldn't mock God Almighty."

"We must bring him back to life."

"Not I. The wretch would have let us perish; now leave his body on the snow for the bears and the foxes. I will have nothing to do with it."

"Oh, Martin, it may be that of his own free will he came back to rescue us."

"The man was Conrad Holbrook." Page 92.

Martin made no reply, nor did he object when Leo rubbed Conrad's hands and arms with snow so vigorously that after a while a slight tinge of color came to the pallid face and the man breathed a soft sigh.

"He lives, Martin, he lives! Help me to save him, or we will be murderers in the sight of God."

The plea was not without avail; with contempt for the traitor, he helped to rub the man vigorously, and at length consciousness returned. The warm coat was wrapped about him and he was left with the little bear.

Seeing the man recover, the icy coldness of Martin's manner seemed to melt away; he became interested in the recovery, and a smile came to his stern countenance.

"Yes," he said in a friendly tone, "he

has come back to life, and the rascal may perhaps repent of his sin, and ask God to forgive him. See, Leo, he has opened his eyes. I am glad now that he did not perish. It was cowardice and fear that caused him to leave us; thank God we have the boat; and the sack of sea biscuit is still in it, we will not starve for a time at least."

"I wonder if they saw him from the 'Dolphin'?"

"I think not; the darkness would prevent that. Providence took care that he should not reach there, the whirlwind of snow stopped him; he turned about; and here he is. He is slowly coming back to life. When he can walk, we will take him to the ravine and make him as comfortable as possible; the little bear will have his share in the recovery."

"Yes, his warm little body is worth a great deal," responded Leo.

"But we must have food to keep us alive," said Martin. "Now that we have the knives we can have a supper of bear meat if we can find fuel to cook it—if animals as hungry as ourselves have not dragged it away," he added.

"We have the meat, the knives and the appetites," remarked Leo, "if we could only get back to shore I am sure we would find driftwood."

"There are two more oars in this boat than are needed, and one is broken," said Conrad feebly, "use them; you will find flint and steel in my pocket."

"Good for you!" said Martin, "you were worth saving, if you did act the coward. Now Conrad," he added, as he took the implements from his pock-

et, "could you walk to the ravine with our help?"

"I will try." He arose and with their assistance walked a step or two, then sank down, and was helped back into the boat.

"Leave me here," he said in a weak tone, "I will be well by to-morrow."

"But you will freeze stiff as before. You cannot go to the ravine just now, but we will put the fur coat around you, and the little bear in your arms, it will keep you warm."

This was done. Martin left to get the bear meat, and Leo sat on the edge of the boat, wrapped in the old bear's skin, until he returned.

Leo had offered to get the meat, leaving Martin to make the fire; but Martin had a plan in view, and that was to use the fat of the bear for fuel.

Martin quickly returned with some fine slices of bear meat, together with the feet; then with part of the broken oar he made a square in which he placed the feet and bits of the fat on some shavings, lit it with Conrad's flint and steel. Then putting a slice of the meat upon the end of a spear, he held it over the blaze until it was a rich brown. With this and some sea-biscuits the three enjoyed a hasty meal.

A biscuit was crumbled for the cub. This he ate with relish, then returned to the lair in the boat and dropped asleep.

Martin and Leo then brought the rest of the meat to a place of safety.

Conrad was so strengthened by the food and sleep that with the help of Martin and Leo he reached the ravine, and found shelter under the rock.

"I do not deserve to live," he said humbly, as they took seats on the ground near him. "You saved my life."

"No, you certainly did not," replied Martin, "but Leo was trained by a Christian mother to love his enemies. You certainly were an enemy to want to leave him on this island to perish."

"Oh, Leo, forgive me! I thank you, and I will do more than that. When I return to Bremen I will see that all is made good to you and yours."

"May the good Lord give you strength to carry out your good intention," said Martin.

CHAPTER IX.

A DISCOVERY.

The sun was lighting the eastern horizon, and lending lustre to the icy region around, when Martin aroused Leo and Conrad from their sleep in the ravine.

"Come, my boys," he said cheerfully, "we must begin to build our snow house. We will first eat a biscuit, and a little later we will have our bear steak."

The boys obeyed promptly; they were glad to do something that would afford a change. They were also glad to be employed for they were weary of inactivity, and while partaking of their simple breakfast they discussed the building of the hut.

"Several years ago," said Conrad, "I was on a trading vessel with a party of hunters to spend a season on Spitzbergen. They brought light material for a hut, and so far as I know had a profitable hunting season."

"Do you know where the hut was?" asked Martin eagerly.

"It could not have been far from here. If found, it would be far better than a snow hut."

"It surely would be better; but how could we find it? Spitzbergen is a large island, and we might starve and freeze to death before finding it."

"It is worth the search," said Conrad, "I am sure it is on this part of the coast, where trading vessels usually anchor."

"Have you no recollection of the exact spot?" asked Leo.

"No; only that this part of the shore seems familiar; their hut was at the foot of a mountain."

"We can see two great hills from here," said Martin, "let us inspect the nearest one, whether we find the hut or not. Conrad has put a good idea into our heads, that is, to build our snow hut at the foot of a cliff, where it will be protected from the storms from the north and east.

With oars in hand Leo and Conrad set cheerily to work to clear away the snow at the foot of the cliff; not an easy task owing to the mass of snow and their poor implements.

"Keep up your spirits, boys!" exclaimed Martin, as he saw them blowing upon their stiffened fingers; "the hard work will be forgotten when we

are sheltered from the bitter wind in our own house."

After a half-hour of steady work the three came to a hard crust of ice under the wall of the cliff.

"There, boys," exclaimed Martin, "is a fine foundation for our house; firm, and as level as a board floor. We could not have found a better spot." And to prove to them the value of it, he gave it a heavy prod with the harpoon. The ice cracked beneath his feet, and he sank out of sight with a cry of terror and surprise.

"Oh, Conrad!" cried Leo pale and weak from the horror of the sudden disappearance. "Martin is lost." Kneeling by the dark aperture, he strove to get sight of him, while Conrad gazed helplessly before him.

Then a sudden thought came to him;

and he said to himself, "He is gone, and the secret has gone with him; a grasp of my hand, a push, and there would be no one left to carry the information of my father's doings back to Bremen."

Satan was tempting him, but there was more good than evil in the boy's heart. Yet he needed help; and dropping upon his knees he whispered, "Lord, deliver me from temptation!"

Leo had no knowledge of the thoughts in the mind of his companion, therefore he was surprised to hear the request. What could be the temptation? Sensible only of fear and danger, he kept calling, "Martin! Martin! Do you hear me, Martin?"

Leo knew that there were clefts and fissures in the ice of Arctic regions, and was tortured with the fear that Martin

had fallen into one of these and would never again be seen.

All was still! No voice replied to the anxious call. Leo felt hopeless of ever again seeing his faithful friend.

"We must not be idle," said Conrad, "He may not be dead, but only hurt so badly that he can't speak. Perhaps we can rescue him."

"Rescue him! Oh, Conrad, do you think it possible?"

"I hope so. The crevice may not be very deep; I will call to him again. Leaning over the aperture he shouted "Martin! Martin!"

At last they heard a voice which could be no other than that of the imprisoned man.

"Did you speak, Martin?" called Leo, thrilling with delight.

"Yes, I believe I landed in the Hol-

lander's hut. The walls of this dark hole are of wood, not of snow. I cannot see clearly, but it certainly looks like a hut. I must have fallen through the chimney, for the roof is not broken. Throw down one of the oars."

This was done. Then with the other oar and a harpoon the boys worked to remove the snow; thus relieving the wall of the pressure against it.

Slowly and patiently they worked and at length the wall of snow gave way and to their delight they found a door. As they pushed it open, there stood Martin blinking at the sudden gleam of light. The boys threw their arms around him, rejoicing that he was saved and unhurt.

"Now boys, go and bring the little bear from the ravine, and we will find a corner for him; the good patient lit-

tle creature must share our home. We must give the little fellow a name, what shall it be?"

"Would you object to our calling him Martin?" asked Leo.

"Instead of objecting, I feel greatly honored. You may go and bring Martin Junior to his new quarters."

They hurried away and soon returned, flushed with curiosity about the Hollander's hut. A comfortable corner was found for the cub before they began the survey. They found several articles which might be called furniture, among them a small stove.

"And here is a good iron pot," remarked Martin, rapping it with his knuckles; "it will serve well in cooking bear soup."

They found several stools, a box which had served as a table, and a few

dishes and other domestic articles, but, best of all, quite a supply of wood and coal left by the Hollanders; and a real fireplace.

"Now, boys," said Martin, "we have a safe place to keep the bear meat; go and bring it in here."

CHAPTER X.

THE RESCUE.

While Martin and his two young companions were really grateful for the shelter afforded them by the hut of the Hollanders, yet they looked anxiously for the sight of a vessel which might possibly reach Spitzbergen, and take them away.

They kept their boat at the spot on shore nearest the hut, that they might see to its safety and be ready to leave at the first opportunity.

They were very sparing of ammunition, not knowing what might arise which would require its use, yet they never suffered for lack of food, and kept in good health.

They had a full supply of several kinds of meat, but found cause for grateful rejoicing, when Conrad recalled the place where grew an herb which the Hollanders appreciated greatly for a salad and soup.

He searched for it, and located the spot where it was found, under the snow. The three relished it as only those could who had so little change in food.

"We are blest, indeed, in having this hut," Martin remarked. "But if we wish to keep our health and be reasonably contented to wait for a chance to leave, we must exercise and when we have an object in view, the exercise is more beneficial in every way." Therefore, when they did not need to hunt for food, they walked along the coast in search of wreckage, especially driftwood for fire.

"We cannot have too much in store," said Martin. "This is only October, we have not yet got far into the polar winter. We must prepare for it to the best of our ability. Even now, when our little stove is almost red hot, we can scarcely feel the heat from it, and a cup of water will freeze close by it.

"We must also watch each others' ears and noses. They will freeze without our knowing it. If they get unnaturally white, we must rub them with snow to bring back the circulation."

The little bear seemed entirely satisfied with his new quarters; he was not playful as are other young animals, nor did he show any affection for the three men; yet, as there was no evidence of a savage nature, he added interest to their uneventful days, so no one of them was willing to part with him.

Hunting was not to be thought of in the bitter weather, and it was a subject of congratulation that they had plenty of meat, and of the green plant for salad, which added variety to their simple fare.

Protected in their hut, and with their little stove red hot, they were yet unable to keep comfortable; the wind whistled through the crevices, and even with their fur coats closely wrapped about them, they shivered.

About the middle of October the sun disappeared, but they had the light of the friendly homelike stars, and the splendor of the aurora borealis, cheering the twilight of an Arctic winter. With the help of seal skins, and the pelt of another bear, they slept comfortably enough on the floor of the hut, and although in November the

cold reached its highest point, they suffered no more from it than they had done earlier in the season.

Thus day after day passed tediously by, and about the beginning of March they began the hunt to replenish their food supply.

Their fear of starvation was now past, and they began to watch early in the season for the appearance of a whaling vessel.

Conrad had taken every opportunity to prove his gratitude to Martin and Leo for their kindness to him; and while bear-hunting he saved Leo from the deadly embrace of a wounded animal.

Leo and Conrad had saved each other's lives; these were the ties that now bound them in close friendship.

April came; the air was now milder

and the great ice fields with which the sea had decked the coast were broken and carried away by the wind and the waves; the broad expanse of open sea was a joy to them, and day after day they watched with eager eyes for the sight of a sail which would free them from their long imprisonment.

Several times there was rejoicing upon seeing a white sail on the distant horizon, which they hoped might be a whaling-vessel; but time and again the hopes were shattered, for no vessel came within range of signals.

Birds came to build their nests; the sea played merrily, dolphins and young whales sported in view of the watchers on shore, but no flag was seen to flutter in the wind and cheer their longing hearts.

"They won't come," sighed Leo in

despair. "They think we have died in this terrible place. We will have to spend another winter here. Oh, my poor mother, how she will grieve."

"Patience, Leo, patience!" said Martin, "the captain is a kind, honorable man, and will not fail to do what is just and right. Remember, it is still very early in the year to go on a whaling voyage; we can scarcely expect them before the middle of June.

Again there appeared a new sail and a new hope; a ship appeared on the distant horizon, a real ship under full sail, there could be no doubt of it. The boys clapped their hands in delight, but, alas! it disappeared in the distance, and they were again disappointed.

"They won't come," sighed Leo again, "they have forgotten us."

"Yes, they will come," replied Mar-

tin, "I have known Captain Bertram too long to doubt him; he is one of the noblest of men. We do not know when, but this I know, that Captain Bertram will not desert us; he will come."

They watched from the shore at all hours of the day. The middle of June came, and even Martin was saddened by the fruitless survey of the sea.

"Boys," he said one evening, "the time has come when we must do what we can to help ourselves out of this prison. Our boat is in good condition. I suggest that we start out to sea; we may spy a vessel that will take us aboard. The whalers are apt to stop farther south than Spitzbergen. Let us go in search of them; I believe God will stand by us in our search, and bring us safely home in His own good

time and way. I do not know why the Dolphin doesn't come, but we must wait no longer. Are you with me?"

"Surely. Anything would be better than living here another winter!"

"Then we will risk it and put our trust in God."

"What about Martin Jr.," continued the pilot. "Surely no one of us would be willing to leave the helpless little creature to take care of himself?"

"No! No!" exclaimed the boys, "he shall share our fortunes, be they what they will," and with light and hopeful hearts they went to rest that night.

It was broad daylight when Martin awoke suddenly, having heard voices. At first he supposed it to be a dream, but hearing the sound again he said, "Listen, boys, help has come."

In an instant the boys rushed to the

door of the hut, and heard the words, "Thank heaven, they are all alive!" and the kind face of Captain Bertram appeared beaming with happiness.

Martin clasped him in his arms, and the boys gave a joyous shout and grasped his hands in happiness too great for expression, while the sailors in the waiting boat raised shouts of rejoicing that the lost had been found.

Captain Bertram was eager to learn how the three had lived in that dreary solitude, and was deeply interested in their account. He considered it a wonder that they had lived through the privations of an Arctic winter, had met with no accidents, suffered no attacks of wild animals; were in fact apparently as well and strong as when they left.

Leo eagerly asked him for news of his mother and his brother Fred; to

which the Captain responded that he had heard a very satisfactory account of them the day before the "Dolphin" sailed, and proceeded to give it in full.

He had paid his customary business visit to the office of the shipping-merchant and found Fred there; He had come hoping to get some information in regard to Leo.

Leo's heart thrilled with joy to know that mother and brother were well, and were looking happily to his return on the "Dolphin", for the news had spread that Captain Bertram was to sail directly to Spitzbergen; the shipping-merchant having given this order when informed of the three being stranded on the island.

"Your mother knows that we sailed at the end of March; and no doubt some sailor friend has informed Fred

that by this time the "Dolphin" has reached Spitzbergen, that you three are on board, and we are merrily searching for our first whale."

The captain added that Lawyer Copeland was in the office of the shipping-merchant at the same time and had told him to give Leo the information that his mother's old enemy Holbrook had been called before a Higher Judge to give an account of his evil doings, and she had nothing more to fear from him.

Conrad was almost overcome upon hearing this, and drew back in the dark little hut, that his emotion might be unnoticed, and Leo pressed his hand in sympathy.

"But all will know of his treatment of your mother," said Conrad in trembling tones.

"They will know also that you are not to blame for your father's faults. No one on the 'Dolphin' except Martin and myself knows of him, and we will keep it to ourselves."

"But my treatment of you, Leo, can you ever forgive me?"

"That has been forgiven long ago; it will not be mentioned on the 'Dolphin'."

During this conversation Martin Jr. had remained quietly in his corner. Now he came forward to have a part in the arrangements.

Captain Bertram was charmed with the beauty of the little animal, his fur so white and soft, showing the care the boys had bestowed upon it.

"Who owns it?" asked the Captain, "and what will be done with it at the end of our voyage?"

"It's Leo's pet," replied Martin, "but he can't take him to his mother's cottage; he is growing, and in time will be a big bear which no one would risk keeping as a pet."

"I will take him off your hands, Leo, if you wish," said the Captain, "he will be a welcome addition to any Zoological Garden."

"I will be glad to know that he is in good hands," said Leo, "I thank you for the offer."

"He has been real company for us; and has helped to entertain us the best he knew," added Martin, "he is not a very jolly companion, but a staid, reliable friend."

The preparations for leaving their Spitzbergen home were quickly made. They had brought nothing there but the bear-skins and the fur coat, there-

fore there was nothing more to take away. They were glad to leave a pile of wood for any one who might succeed them in the hut. They passed out without regret, yet grateful for the shelter it had given.

They were now ready for the boats, the Captain and Martin leading the way, Leo and Conrad following; Leo carrying the cub. On their arrival on board the sailors on the "Dolphin" waved their caps and cheered the three who had been lost. They were charmed with the little white stranger, who paid no attention to them, but soon found a corner and cuddled down for sleep.

Martin was back in his old place as pilot. The boys were eager to serve in any position given them, and the "Dolphin's" summer expedition proved a success." They returned to their start-

ing point with a full cargo, captain and crew rejoicing to be back home again.

In the meantime Fred had been watching each day for the return of the "Dolphin", his boat in readiness to row to the spot where it would stop, should Leo be on board.

To his delight the "Dolphin" halted. He sped to the side of the vessel just as Leo came down the rope ladder. For a moment the brothers were clasped in each others arms.

"Goodby! Goodby!" called Martin and Conrad, "we will see you soon." The captain and crew joined in the farewell with hearty cheers.

The little boat sped over the waves, and Leo was soon at home.

Words could not express the delight of his mother to see him again after the long, anxious separation. "My dear,

dear mother!" "My beloved son!" were the words of greeting as Leo clasped her in his arms. "Our dear Heavenly Father is so good to us," and tears of joy filled their eyes.

Life was full of interest to the three in that lovely cottage home. There was much to say and to hear; then a few days later they had a visit from Martin and Conrad upon a matter of business. Conrad had come to redeem his promise made on the lonely Island of Spitzbergen.

Lawyer Copeland had written out a full account of the purchase of the Uranus, and of the insurance upon it, also the paper in which Holbrook had placed the insurance in his own name. He had taken matters in hand and from the papers relating to the vessel he had found that the widow of his part-

ner was entitled to half the insurance money.

Lawyer Copeland had deposited the money in a bank in her name and then brought the papers for her signature.

"Now, Leo," said Martin, turning to him," Captain Bertram is hoping that you will go on the next whaling voyage of the 'Dolphin'. Will you be with us?"

"Give my thanks to Captain Bertram for all his kindness, and for the compliment he pays me by his offer, but tell him that mother wishes so earnestly to have her boys with her, that I could not think of leaving her again. We can find profitable fishing in home waters, and as for the next whaling voyage, convey my best wishes for his success."

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